



University of Florida Counselor Education Program 2023-2024 Annual Report

The mission of the University of Florida (UF) Counselor Education Program is to prepare exemplary counselor educators, marriage and family counselors, mental health counselors, school counselors, and program administrators who generate, apply, and share knowledge of human development and relationships to enrich the quality of life for all people. Graduates are dedicated to collaborating with others to address critical personal, family, educational, social, and vocational challenges within a diverse global community. Students and faculty are expected to uphold the highest ethical and professional standards while pursuing this mission.

The purpose of this annual report is to inform stakeholders of the Counselor Education Program, including students, faculty, administration (school, college, and university), alumni, site hosts, employers of graduates, community partners, and the public about program evaluation results, program modifications based on these results, and other significant program changes.

1. Enrollment Data and Faculty Changes

The UF Counselor Education program admits new students once a year during the Fall semester. The program faculty reviewed 233 applications for the Master's/Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) program and enrolled 30 students. No doctoral students were accepted for this school year because recent faculty turnover limited the availability of research faculty to serve as doctoral committee chair.

Table 1 contains a summary of the number of prospective students that applied, were admitted, and enrolled.

Table 1: Number of Students that applied, were admitted, and enrolled during the 2023-2024 year

Program	Applied	Admitted	Enrolled
Master's/Ed.S. Program Tracks			
Mental Health (CMHC)	164	25	16
Marriage and Family (MCFC)	43	14	7
School (SC)	26	11	7
Master/Ed.S. Total	233	50	30
Doctoral Program			
Ph.D. in Counseling and Counselor Education (CES)	18	-	-

2. Number of Graduates, Program Completion, Certification/Licensure Exam Pass Rate, and Job Placement Rate

Forty Master's/Ed.S. students and five doctoral students that graduated during the 2023-2024 academic year. The program's completion rate was 100% for the Master's/Ed.S. program and 100% for the doctoral program. Graduates of the Master's/Ed.S. program consistently pass the state of Florida licensure exam and the school counseling certification exam, with an overall passing rate of (94%) for the reporting period (Table 2). The graduates' reported job placement rate for the 2023-2024 year was 100% for the Clinical Mental Health (CMH) and School Counseling Master's/Ed.S. program, and 83% for the Marriage & Family Counseling (MFC) program. Furthermore, the post-graduation job-placement rate was 100 % for the Ph.D. program.

Table 2 contains a summary of the number of graduates, program completion rate, certification/licensure exam pass rate, and job placement rate for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Table 2: Graduation, Certification/Licensure, and Job Placement Data

Program	Number of Students who Graduated	Completion Rate	Certification/Licensure Exam Pass Rate	Job Placement Rate*
Master's/Ed.S. Program Tracks				
Mental Health (MHC)	17	100%	100%	100%
Marriage & Family (MFC)	13	100%	83.3%	100%
School (SC)	10	100%	100%	100%
Master's/Ed.S. Total	38	100%	94%	100%
Doctoral Program				
Ph.D. in Counseling and Counselor Education (CCE)	5	60%	N/A	100% (n=4)

Note: Mental health licensure exam pass rate reported for 2023, as the report is published by the calendar year. In addition, this is not a reflection of recent graduates, but anyone affiliated with the program that takes their licensing exam in the several years following graduation.

3. Curricular Evaluation and Enhancement

In accordance with the 2016 CACREP standards, the UF Counselor Education Program collected data in alignment with their Comprehensive Assessment Plan to measure and evaluate key program components, student progress, and curriculum design.

Master's/Ed.S.

Master's/Ed.S. KPIs: Students are evaluated on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in coursework and site supervisors' evaluations during Practicum and Internship (P&I) field experiences. KPIs are scores on a four-point scale (exceptional, accomplished, developing, unsatisfactory) with "accomplished" as a benchmark for satisfactory progress. In reviewing all KPI data in coursework and the P&I end-of-term evaluation for the 2023-2024 year, the majority of Master's/Ed.S. students scored at the "accomplished" or "exceptional" performance level for all KPIs. No Master's/Ed.S. students scored in the "unsatisfactory" performance level for any KPIs. However, two students enrolled in 2023-2024 subsequently selected out of the program. Among students who graduated in December 2023, site supervisors' average ratings on the P&I End-of-Term reports were consistently above 3.5.

Master's/Ed.S. Academic Performance and Professional Dispositions: New students are evaluated after their first semester in the program and individual support was provided to these students where needed. All students are evaluated in the Spring semester. In evaluating students in Spring 2024, 100% were rated "satisfactory" or "outstanding" in all areas. Anytime students evaluated in the "needs improvement" and "unsatisfactory" categories, they met with their advisors to discuss plans to address these areas.

Master's/Ed.S. Student Engagement: Master's/Ed.S students engage in professional organizations, supervised research, and leadership and advocacy opportunities. The capstone assignment details conference or workshop participation for 100% of graduating students who completed in December 2023 and documentation is provided in the Canvas assignment portal and rated in LiveText. In 2023-2024, the program provided travel grants to several students as a means of providing financial support for their professional development. Entry-level students reported participation in conferences such as the American Counseling Association (ACA), Florida Counseling Association (FCA), and Florida School Counseling Association (FSCA).

Master's/Ed.S. Students' Evaluation of Practicum and Internship Sites: Practicum and internship students are asked to evaluate the placement site and the practicum and internship experience at the end of the semester for each placement. The students identified strengths such as constructive feedback highlighting strengths and areas for growth, experiential learning, and diverse site experiences that enhanced knowledge and clinical skills, as well as areas for improvement, including greater consistency among faculty and clinical site supervisors, and more opportunities to work with families for marriage and family students. Overall, most students reported that their supervisors and placement sites positively contributing to their educational experience. The mean scores on these evaluations, which included a 4-point scale, ranged from 3.52-3.81. Students' ratings of site supervisors were also positive from 3.71-3.84.

Master's/Ed.S. Site Supervisor Evaluation: Site supervisors evaluate the overall preparation of the students for clinical experiences and the experience with the program during the clinical experience process. Site supervisors recommended improvements to strengthen clinical experiences, including streamlining paperwork, clear communication about roles and student assessment, and improvements to the counselor preparation program, including additional instruction on threat assessment and reporting, and a greater emphasis on school settings. Site supervisors also acknowledged the high quality of the program, noting that UF Counselor Education students are well prepared.

Master's/Ed.S. Exit Survey: For the 2023–2024-school year, 43 Master's/Ed.S. students completed the survey (19 Mental Health Counseling, 14 Marriage and Family Counseling, and 10 School Counseling students). MHC students cited program strengths (e.g., diverse cohort, experiential learning, and quality internship experiences), and areas for program improvement (e.g., focus on career/job, and consistency in sites, and communication between sites and faculty). The MFC students identified program strengths (e.g., faculty availability, the cohort model, smaller cohort size, experiential activities and practicing skills, practicum and internship experiences), and areas for improvement (e.g., to offer more opportunities for relational hours, and more MFC-focused sites). School counseling graduates observed similar strengths in their experiences in the program (e.g., cohort model and cohesiveness of peer groups, the quality of supervision with individual, group, and site supervisors, and positive relationships with faculty). A primary concern for school counseling graduates during this year was a lack of focus on school counseling in core courses and the limited number of faculty who specialize in school counseling. Overall, most students reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they were prepared to work in the counseling field in the areas included in the survey.

Doctoral

Doctoral KPIs: In reviewing data for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the 2023-2024 year, all doctoral students scored at the accomplished or exceptional performance level for all KPIs, with no students performing at the “developing” or “unsatisfactory” levels.

Doctoral Academic Performance and Professional Dispositions: In the Spring of 2024, 16 current students all were rated as “satisfactory” or “outstanding” in all areas. When students are rated as “needs improvement” in one category, they are required to meet with their advisor/dissertation chair to discuss plans to address this area.

Doctoral Student Engagement: Each Spring/Summer semester, doctoral students self-report their engagement in the counseling profession throughout the year. Documentation of doctoral student engagement is documented in their e-portfolios and evaluated by their doctoral committee members at the admission to candidacy meeting. In addition, students provide an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and self-assessment in the spring of every year that includes a report of their engagement in various areas throughout the year.

UF Counseling and Counseling Education Ph.D. students are active in professional organizations and scholarly activities. In 2023-2024, responses indicated a strong record of publication, presentation, and leadership in the counseling profession. Doctoral students published more than

15 papers in counseling and related journals (e.g., The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation) and presented at national and regional conferences (e.g., AARC, ACA, SACES). Students also were active in professional service, including conference volunteer activities, in which they assisted with organizing and proposal review for Association for Specialists in Groupwork (ASGW) and FCA, and conducted workshops for Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) and FCA.

Doctoral Exit Survey: Students complete an Exit Survey at the end of their program. For the 2023-2024 year, three doctoral students completed the survey. Of these students, the students reported being “mostly satisfied” with their learning experiences in the program. Students identified areas for improvement (e.g., greater flexibility in Advanced Practicum, difficulty starting program during COVID 19 pandemic) as well as program strengths (e.g., supporting one-one mentoring, networking).

4. Constituent Surveys

In accordance with the 2016 CACREP standards, the UF Counselor Education Program used all updated constituent surveys, including surveys to site supervisors, employers, and alumni to inform program modifications that enhance the quality of our program. Alumni surveys are sent out alternating Spring semesters. Based on recent alumni and employer surveys, most program graduates retain employment in the counseling field within 6 months of graduation. Of the employers who responded to recent surveys, 100% were positive about the completers’ overall qualifications (with at least one employer responding for each track).

5. CACREP Self Study

CACREP accreditation for the four program areas was fully approved in 2022.

6. Data-Informed Program Changes and Modifications

Program faculty reviewed student outcome data and discussed other initiatives for the year. Student outcomes remain strong, with 100% of students successfully completing their degree program at or above a “satisfactory” threshold of knowledge and competency. Overall, the 2023-2024 data suggest students seem well prepared and competent for the next stage of their career, as evidenced by multiple data points (e.g., student assessment, constituent surveys). Program faculty continue to work to create opportunities across coursework for students to develop as counseling researchers. This fall (2024-2025), we admitted a new doctoral cohort of four students and aim to revitalize the program and admit a larger cohort for next year with new research faculty hires.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the program added a full-time Practicum and Internship coordinator and transitioned a visiting faculty member to core faculty. One faculty member departed and the process of obtaining approval for future faculty search committee was initiated. Based on the 2023-2024 survey data, site supervisors and recent graduates of the Master’s/Ed.S. and PhD. programs identified key areas for improvement, including increased instruction on threat assessment and reporting, a greater emphasis on school counseling content and school focused faculty, improved site consistency and communication between sites and faculty, expanded opportunities for relational hours and MFC-focused sites, attention to career

development for mental health students, and increased flexibility in advanced practicum experiences at the doctoral level. A main area for growth again this upcoming year is also to incorporate new faculty into the mission of the program (e.g., school counseling faculty, increased grant work). Moreover, a continued goal for the 2024-2025 school year is to revitalize the doctoral program and to work toward sustainability.

Together, stakeholders recommended improvements in the areas of career development activities, job placement, and professional networking. In reviewing all program evaluation data, including aggregate data from the 2016 CACREP standard Key Performance Indicators (KPI) assignments, enrollment data, and constituent surveys, the faculty made the following program updates. Strategies taken to address these areas as well as additional program improvements are listed below:

Substantive Program Improvements and Initiatives 2023-2024:

To increase enrollment, program faculty implemented recruitment strategies:

- Updated and distributed recruitment materials to undergraduates at UF and at the College of Education Recruitment Fair.
- Hosted a virtual open house in early Fall 2023, engaging with prospective students.
- Distributed recruitment materials at professional conferences.

To ensure students are prepared for and secure professional roles or pursue further graduate education post-graduation, faculty initiated the following:

- Hired a new P&I coordinator to manage site development, site partnerships, and organization of procedures.
- MFC faculty enhanced opportunities to earn required relational hours.
- Conducted career preparation and job search workshops, including a Practicum and Internship Fair that facilitated networking with local counseling agencies.
- CSI Beta chapter hosted a panel on licensure, résumé writing, and job search strategies.
- Held a Spring 2023 faculty retreat to assess program strengths, identify areas for improvement, and update the student handbook.

To produce scholarly work and engage students in professional development and networking:

- Faculty involved students in two interdisciplinary training grant initiatives (Project EQuIP Counselors and Gator Connect) and continue to pursue additional grant funding.
- Students actively participated in faculty-led research, grant work, and presentations.
- Faculty promoted professional service and leadership opportunities encouraging student participation in conferences and leadership roles.
- Two new research faculty are hired to begin in 2024-2025.

In fostering professional engagement at the state, national, and international levels:

- The program offered travel grants to support student attendance at professional conferences, a requirement reflected in students' Capstone Projects.

- Faculty collaborated with UF and community to host workshops and trainings for ongoing professional development (e.g., TERO Threat Evaluation and Reporting Overview training).